



ORGANIZING A TOWN HALL MEETING

Sample Panelist Invitation Letter

[Date]

[Name]

[Title]

[Organization]

[Address]

[City, State, ZIP]

Dear [Salutation] [Last name]:

Alcohol use among children and adolescents starts early and increases rapidly with age. In 2008, 15.9 percent of 8th graders, 28.8 percent of 10th graders, and 43.1 percent of 12th graders reported drinking an alcoholic beverage in the previous month. Heavy drinking is a problem at all three grade levels. Among eighth graders, about 1 in 20 (5.4 percent) reported being drunk at least once in the past month. Nearly 1 out of every 7 10th graders (14.4 percent) and about 2 out of every 7 12th graders (27.6 percent) reported being drunk at least once in the last month.¹

To help educate young people and caring adults about the risks associated with underage drinking, the Federal Government's Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking is supporting a series of Town Hall Meetings. The meetings will take place in communities across America during the week of March 22–March 26, which coincides with the start of April's Alcohol Awareness Month.

[Community] is planning a Town Hall Meeting in our area on [Date and time] at [Location]. This meeting will give us the opportunity to educate parents, teachers, officials, youth, and other community members about the impact of underage drinking and will allow us to develop possible solutions.

As an organization committed to preventing underage drinking, [Name of your organization] is inviting you to lend your expertise by being a presenter at our Town Hall Meeting on [Date]. We will provide you with talking points that you can use during the [Length of time] presentation. With participation from prominent local spokespersons, we hope to raise awareness of the risks of underage drinking and to encourage broader use of the many resources that are available to youth, parents, schools, and communities. Media will also be encouraged to cover this Town Hall Meeting.

I will follow up in a few days to inquire about whether you would be willing to serve on the panel or you may contact [Name of representative from your organization] at [Phone number] or via email at [Contact person's email address]. We hope you will join us in educating our community about the importance of preventing underage drinking.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

¹ National Institute on Drug Abuse. 2008. *Monitoring the Future: National Results on Adolescent Drug Use—Overview of Key Findings. 2008* (electronic version). Retrieved from <http://www.drugabuse.gov/PDF/overview2008.pdf>.